

REMARKS

Claims 1-13, 17-21, and 23-37 are currently pending in the subject application and are presently under consideration. Claims 1, 4, 6, 13, 23-26, 28, 29, 31 and 32 have been amended as shown on pp. 2-6 of the Reply. In addition, claims 34-37 have been cancelled and claim 38 has been newly added. Applicants' representative thanks Examiner Zhen for the courtesies extended during the telephone interview conducted on November 24, 2008. Distinctions between the cited references and the claims were discussed. The Examiner agreed that the claims, as amended, overcome the rejections. Favorable reconsideration of the subject patent application is respectfully requested in view of the comments and amendments herein.

I. Rejection of Claims 13 and 23 Under 35 U.S.C. §101

Claims 13 and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. Claims 13 and 23 have been amended herein to recite physical computer media. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

II. Rejection of Claims 1-13, 17-21, and 23-37 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-13, 17-21, and 23-37 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hütsch et al. (US 7,269,664) in view of Carlson et al. (US 7,149,734). It is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn for at least the following reasons. The cited references, when taken alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest all aspects recited in the subject claims.

[T]he prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all claim limitations. See MPEP §706.02(j). See *In re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991). See *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, 180 USPQ 580 (CCPA 1974). [W]hen the prior art teaches away from combining certain known elements, discovery of a successful means of combining them is more likely to be non-obvious. See *KSR v. Teleflex*, 550 U.S. ___, 127 S. Ct. 1727 (2007) citing *United States v. Adams*, 383 U. S. 39, 51-52 (1966). A factfinder should be aware, of course, of the distortion caused by hindsight bias and must be cautious of arguments reliant upon *ex post* reasoning. See *KSR v. Teleflex*, 550 U.S. ___, 127 S. Ct. 1727 (2007) citing *Graham v. John Deere Co. of Kansas City*, 383 U. S. 1, 36 (warning against a "temptation to read into the prior art the teachings of the invention in issue" and instructing courts to "guard against slipping into the use of hindsight" (quoting *Monroe*

Auto Equipment Co. v. Heckethorn Mfg. & Supply Co., 332 F. 2d 406, 412 (CA6 1964))).

The claimed subject matter relates to an integration architecture that enables non-integrated tools or applications that are individually architected to integrate data and interact within a development environment. Data items from disparate applications can be exposed and interlink such that relationships between the data items can be created and understood. To this end, independent claim 1 recites *a system that facilitates the interface of non-integrated applications, comprising a processor coupled to memory that retains an artifact provider that hosts artifacts of a first application, the artifacts include items of data the first application publicly exposes to other applications, each artifact is associated with an artifact type, the artifact type can be at least one of a source file, a defect, a requirement, a test result or a build and an artifact consumer that host artifacts of a second application, the artifact consumer further includes at least one reference, each of the at least one reference is associated with one referring artifact hosted by the second application and is a link to one referenced artifact of the first application hosted by the artifact provider, the link further comprises a link type that describes a relationship between the referring artifact of the second application and the referenced artifact of the first application.* The cited references do not teach or suggest such aspects.

Hütsch et al. relates to a network portal system that consolidates content from a plurality of content providers (e.g., native and external) and provides standardize access to the content through a universal content broker. Content can be associated with content identifiers that enable the universal content broker to located and obtain content. A user can submit a request on the network portal web site via browser. The universal content broker locates content and provides it to the user. The universal content broker can transform or organize the data according to templates associated with a particular user device employed to submit the request. Carlson et al. relates to reusing software assets with an enterprise. A software asset is a set of one or more related artifacts created for repeated use in a development environment.

In the claimed subject matter, a first application and a second application hold artifacts. One of the applications further includes a reference that is associated with an artifact it holds (e.g., a referring artifact). The reference includes an identifier of an artifact held by the other of

the applications (e.g., a referenced artifact). The reference enables a one-to-one (e.g., binary) link to be established between the referring artifact and the referenced artifact. The link includes a type that describes the relationship between the referring and referenced artifacts.

In Hütsch et al., content providers retain content that is associated with a content identifier. A universal content broker can access the content via the content identifier in order to satisfy a user request received. However, the cited reference does not describe links or references between content of content providers. Hütsch et al. is silent regarding a content provider holding a reference to another content provider that indicates a relationship between content respectively retained therein. Carlson et al. fails to make up for the aforementioned deficiencies. Rather Carlson et al. discloses artifacts being collected and aggregated into assets. However, Carlson et al. does not disclose links between artifacts on a one-to-one basis (e.g., links between a referring artifact and a referenced artifact) as recited in the subject claims.

Similarly, independent claim 23 recites *providing an artifact provider that communicates with a first non-integrated application, exposing a referenced artifact hosted by the first application via the artifact provider, the artifact comprises an item of public data of the first application, providing an artifact consumer that communicates with a second non-integrated application, the second application includes a referring artifact that is an item of public data of the second application, exposing a reference held by second application and the referring artifact associated with the reference via the artifact consumer and linking the referring artifact to the referenced artifact via the reference that includes an artifact identifier of the referenced artifact*. As discussed supra, Hütsch et al. discloses providing access to a plurality of content hosted by content providers. However, the cited reference does not disclose references and/or links between data as recited in the claims. Hütsch et al. does not disclose links between content hosted by different content providers. In addition, Carlson et al. fails to cure the deficiencies of Hütsch et al. with respect to independent claim 23. Carlson et al. does not disclose linking a referring artifact to a referenced artifact. Rather, the cited reference discloses grouping one or more artifacts together in a set based upon some relation.

In view of at least the foregoing, it is readily apparent that the cited references, alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the invention as recited in independent claim 1 and 23 (and associated dependent claims). Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

CONCLUSION

The present application is believed to be in condition for allowance in view of the above comments and amendments. A prompt action to such end is earnestly solicited.

In the event any fees are due in connection with this document, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to Deposit Account No. 50-1063 [MSFTP586US].

Should the Examiner believe a telephone interview would be helpful to expedite favorable prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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